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Specification and Drawings, as originally filed, with Application for Patent Serial No:
2,316,427, on June 15, 2000, by **DAVE KORMOS**, for "Apparatus and Method for
Applying Mud to Drywall Tape"

Sylvie Grogier
Agent certificateur/Certifying Officer
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P&K 776-02-01

Page2

5

ABSTRACT

A method for applying drywall mud to drywall tape allowing for lengthy stoppages in a drywall application process comprises
10 threading the drywall tape through mud in a container. When the drywall process is interrupted, a strip of material is attached to at least one surface of the drywall tape between the roll and the container. The strip of material is substantially longer than the distance across the container
15 and has a tensile strength substantially unaffected by prolonged exposure to drywall mud. The drywall tape with attached material is drawn through the container until both ends of the strip of material extend outside the container on opposite sides thereof. The container is sealed and the
20 apparatus, with tape still threaded through the container may now be left for a prolonged period of time. When it is desired to re-commence the drywall process, the drywall tape and applied material is drawn through the slots until the material exits the container and is torn off and discarded,
25 leaving a free end of drywall tape outside the container available for grasping and pulling more drywall tape. The material is conveniently adhesive tape. An apparatus for conveniently applying mud to drywall tape is also provided.

F&K 776-02-01

Page3

5

APPARATUS AND METHOD FOR APPLYING MUD TO DRYWALL TAPE

This invention is in the field of construction methods and in
10 particular methods for applying drywall mud to drywall tape.

BACKGROUND

Drywall finishing requires that joints and corners be finished
15 by applying drywall mud thereto, allowing the mud to dry, and
sanding smooth. Several coats may be required to provide a
smooth finish that is satisfactory. The initial coat on a
joint comprises a paper or mesh strip, commonly called drywall
tape, which is coated with mud and then applied over the
20 joint. Where the job is done by hand, a coat of mud is
generally applied to the joint, the tape is pressed into this
mud, and another layer of mud is applied over the tape.

Also known are apparatuses for applying mud to drywall tape by
25 drawing the tape through slots on one side or each side of a
pail of mud. Such apparatuses are disclosed in United States
Patent Numbers 5,676,793 to Martin et al.; 5,242,495 to

P&K 776-02-01

Page4

5 Hammond et al.; and 5,498,287 to Barnfield. These
demonstrate a relatively simple and effective means of coating
drywall tape with mud.

If left standing in these prior art containers, paper drywall
10 tape becomes saturated and deteriorates to the point where
same can no longer withstand the force required to pull it
through the container of mud. Should the drywall procedure be
interrupted for a period of time, the tape may break when next
the operator pulls on the free end of the tape extending from
15 the bucket. The operator of the Barnfield or Hammond devices
must then remove the mud from the container and re-thread
fresh tape through the slots in the container. The Martin
device does provide a feeder plate and guide for installation
in the container for pulling the tape through the mud and
20 container slots.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

25 It is an object of the present invention to provide a simple,
economical method and apparatus that allows for use of a
slotted container of mud with drywall tape drawn through the
slots and the mud, on an intermittent basis, such that the

F&K 776-02-01

Page5

5 open container top could be sealed, and the drywall tape 1 ft threaded through the slots, for extended periods, such as from one day to the next, or longer.

It is a further object of the invention to provide an
10 apparatus for conveniently applying drywall mud to drywall tape.

The invention accomplishes the object in one aspect by providing a container with access through slots in opposing
15 sidewalls to thread a free end of a roll of drywall tape. A free end of a roll of drywall tape is threaded from outside the container through a first slot, then through the container, then through a second slot to the outside of the container. Drywall mud is placed into the container to a
20 level above the drywall tape and the drywall tape is drawn through the slots, thereby coating same with drywall mud. Coated drywall tape is torn off while leaving a free end of drywall tape outside the container available for grasping and pulling more drywall tape.

25.

When the drywall process is interrupted, a strip of material, such as adhesive tape, is attached to at least one surface of the drywall tape between the roll and the first slot. The

N6K 776-02-01

Page6

5 strip of adhesive tape is substantially longer than the distance across the container and has a tensile strength substantially unaffected by prolonged exposure to drywall mud.

The drywall tape with attached adhesive tape, is drawn through the first and second slots until a first end of the
10 strip of adhesive tape extends outside the container and a second end of the adhesive tape remains between the roll and the first slot. The open top of the container is sealed and the apparatus, with tape still threaded through the container may now be left for a prolonged period of time. While the
15 drywall tape in the container will deteriorate, the adhesive tape will not.

When it is desired to re-commence the drywall process, the drywall tape and applied adhesive tape is drawn through the
20 slots until the second end of the strip of adhesive tape exits the container through the second slot. The strip of adhesive tape and attached drywall tape is torn off and discarded, leaving a free end of drywall tape outside the container available for grasping and pulling more drywall tape.

25

Some drying and solidification of the mud adjacent to the slots can occur. This can result in undesirable granules of dried mud on the coated drywall tape when the process is

F&K 776-02-01

Page 7

5 restarted. The slots may be plugged or taped over to prevent
drying of the mud. Alternatively

The method is suitable for small jobs, since mud coated
drywall tape is always quickly available, and an apparatus can
10 be stored for relatively lengthy periods.

In a second aspect the invention provides an apparatus for
applying drywall mud to drywall tape, comprising a base,
having a flat bottom surface, a roll end and a dispensing end;
15 a container including an open top, sidewalls and a floor, and
attached to an upper surface of the base, between the roll end
and dispensing end. A first slot is defined by one sidewall
facing the roll end, and a second slot is defined by an
opposite sidewall facing the dispensing end of the base. The
20 slots are located in proximity to the container floor. A
cover is operative to releasably seal the open top of the
container. A roll feeding member extends upwards from the
roll end of the base. Means are provided to releasably and
rotatably mount a roll of drywall tape on the roll feeding
25 member, about a substantially horizontal axis, such that a
lower extremity of the roll of drywall tape is above the
bottom surface of the base.

F&K 776-02-01

Page8

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DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS:

While the invention is claimed in the concluding portions hereof, preferred embodiments are provided in the accompanying detailed description which may be best understood in conjunction with the accompanying diagrams where like parts in each of the several diagrams are labeled with like numbers, and where:

15 Fig. 1 is a side view of an apparatus for applying mud to drywall tape;

Fig. 2 is a top view of the apparatus of Fig. 1;

20 Figs. 4 - 4B are side views of the apparatus of Fig. 1 showing the operation thereof;

Fig. 5 is a top view of a piece of adhesive tape applied to a length of drywall tape;

25

Fig. 6 is a side view of a slot in a container and a strip of drywall tape and attached plastic adhesive strip;

5

Fig. 7 is an end view of the slot, a strip of drywall tape and attached plastic adhesive strip of Fig. 6.

10 DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE ILLUSTRATED EMBODIMENTS:

Figs. 1 and 2 illustrate an apparatus for applying drywall mud to drywall tape.

15 The apparatus comprises a base 1, having a flat bottom surface 2 for resting on a table or floor, a roll end 3 and a dispensing end 4. A container 5 is attached to the upper surface 6 of the base 1, between the roll end 3 and the dispensing end 4. The container 5 includes an open top 7, 20 sidewalls 8 and a floor 9. A first slot 10 is defined by one sidewall 8r facing the roll end 3 of the base 1, and a second slot 11 is defined by an opposite sidewall 8d facing the dispensing end 4 of the base 1. The slots 10, 11 are located in proximity to the floor 9 of the container 5. A cover 12 is 25 operative to releasably seal the open top 7 of the container 5.

A roll feeding member 13 extends upwards from the roll end 3

F4K 776-02-01

Page10

8 of the base 1. In the illustrated embodiment, the roll feeding member 13 and base 2 are integral, with the roll feeding member 13 being a bent upwards extension of the base 2. A roll of drywall tape 14 is releasably and rotatably mounted on the roll feeding member 13, about a substantially horizontal axis such that a lower extremity 14a of the roll of drywall tape 14 is above the bottom surface 2 of the base 1. The roll 14 may then rotate freely.

The slots 10, 11 defined by the sidewalls 8 are substantially horizontal in the illustrated embodiment. This orientation accommodates feeding from the roll of drywall tape 14, however the slots 10, 11 could be oriented vertically or somewhere in between.

20 A gap 16 is defined by the roll feeding member 13 to accommodate the roll of drywall tape 14. The means to releasably and rotatably mount the roll of drywall tape 14 comprises a horizontal rod 15 extending across the top of the gap 16. A shaft 17 is attached at each end of the rod 15 substantially perpendicular to the horizontal rod 15 and parallel to each other. In the illustrated embodiment the shafts 17 and rod 15 are integral, the shafts 17 being simply bent from the rod 15. The illustrated shafts 17 are

F&K 776-02-01

Pagell

5 substantially parrallel and are slidingly received in
apertures 18 defined by the roll feeding member 13 on each
side of the gap 16. The rod 15 may thus be readily removed
from the apparatus for removing or replacing the roll of
drywall tape 14.

10

The illustrated apparatus can be used to practice the method
of the invention for applying drywall mud to drywall tape
allowing for lengthy stoppages in a drywall application
process.

15

A free end 20 of a roll of drywall tape 14 is threaded from
outside the container 5 through the first slot 10, then
through the container 5, then through the second slot 11 to
the outside of the container 5. Drywall mud 21 is placed into
20 the container 5 to a level above the drywall tape 22. The
drywall tape 22 is drawn through the slots 10, 11 thereby
coating same with drywall mud 21. The coated drywall tape 22c
is torn off as needed while always leaving a free end 20 of
drywall tape 22 outside the container 5 available for grasping
25 and pulling more drywall tape 22.

When the drywall process is interrupted, such as when the work
day is finished, none of the prior art allows the drywall tape

F&K 776-02-01

Page12

5 22 to be left in mud 21, as the paper drywall tape will very quickly deteriorate by absorbing moisture from the mud 21 such that when it is attempted to grasp the free end 20 of the drywall tape 22 and pull more through the container 5, the drywall tape 22 will break. The operator must then remove mud
10 21 from the container 5 and re-thread drywall tape 22 through the container 5.

To avoid this there is attached to the drywall tape 22, between the roll 14 and the first slot 10, a strip of material
15 having a tensile strength substantially unaffected by prolonged exposure to drywall mud 21. The strip of material is substantially longer than the distance across the container 5 between the first and second slots 10, 11. The strip may be attached to the drywall tape 22 by adhesives, staples or
20 similar means.

The strip of material may be plastic film 23 such as is illustrated in Fig. 3, whose tensile strength is unaffected by exposure to mud 21 and is also impervious to moisture from mud
25 21. The plastic film 23 is attached to the drywall tape 22 by simply wrapping same around the drywall tape 22 so as to surround a portion of drywall tape 22 and prevent moisture from the mud 21 contacting the portion of drywall tape 22.

F&K 776-02-01

Page13

- 5 The seam 23s may be sealed with glue r tape. This method prevents deterioration of the drywall tape 22 and allows same to remain in the mud 21 for prolonged periods and pulled through the container 5 at a later time.
- 10 Alternatively, as illustrated in Figs. 4, 4A and 4B, a strip of plastic adhesive tape 25 that is longer than the distance between the first and second slots 10, 11, is adhesively attached to one side of the drywall tape 22 between the roll 14 and the first slot 10. The attachment must be strong
- 15 enough that the adhesive tape 25 will bring the drywall tape 22 with it when drawn through the slots 10, 11.

The drywall tape 22 with attached strip of material, such as either the plastic film 23 or adhesive tape 25, is drawn

20 through the first and second slots 10, 11 until a first end 30 of the strip of material 23, 25 extends outside the container 5 and a second end 31 of the strip of material 23, 25 remains between the roll 14 and the first slot 10. The container 5 is sealed by installing the cover 12 on the open top 7 of the

25 container 5. The slots 10, 11 may also be sealed with tape or plugs to prevent solidification of the mud 21 adjacent thereto and subsequent troublesome granules of dried mud adhering to the drywall tape 22.

F&K 776-02-01

Page 14

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Alternatively, as illustrated in Figs. 6 and 7, the slots 10, 11 may be sealed by providing a strip of material, such as plastic adhesive strip 26, that has a width substantially equal to the width of the drywall tape 22 and a thickness such
10 that the drywall tape 22 and attached plastic adhesive strip 26 substantially fill the first and second slots 10, 11 when same are drawn therethrough, thereby substantially sealing the slots 10, 11. Typically, for the common two inch wide drywall tape 22, the slots 10, 11 will be 2.125 inches wide and about
15 .06 inches deep.

The apparatus may then be left standing as illustrated in Fig. 4A for a prolonged period of time. When it is desired again to coat more drywall tape 22 with mud 21, the drywall tape 22 and applied strip of material 23, 25 are drawn through the
20 slots 10, 11 until the second end 31 of the strip of material 23, 25 exits the container 5 through the second slot 11 as ill in Fig. 4B. The strip of material 23, 25 and attached portion of drywall tape 22, may then be torn off and
25 discarded, leaving a free end 20 of drywall tape 22 outside the container 5 available for grasping and pulling more drywall tape 5 through the container 5.

B&K 776-02-01

Page15

5 In Figs. 4, 4A and 4B, a second strip of adhesive tape 25a is adhesively attached to the drywall tape 22 on a side thereof opposite the strip of adhesive tape 25, however in most situations a strip of adhesive tape 25 on one side of the drywall tape 22 should suffice, provided the portion extending
10 between the roll 14 and first slot 10 is adhered strongly enough to pull the drywall tape through the container 5. As illustrated in Fig. 5, for maximum strength of adhesion, the adhesive tape 25 has a width substantially equal to a width of the drywall tape 22.

15

The foregoing is considered as illustrative only of the principles of the invention. Further, since numerous changes and modifications will readily occur to those skilled in the art, it is not desired to limit the invention to the exact
20 construction and operation shown and described, and accordingly, all such suitable changes or modifications in structure or operation which may be resorted to are intended to fall within the scope of the claimed invention.

F&K 776-02-01

Page 16

CLAIMS:

I claim:

1. A method for applying drywall mud to drywall tape allowing for lengthy stoppages in a drywall application process, said method comprising:

threading a free end of a roll of drywall tape from outside a container through a first slot, then through said container, then through a second slot to the outside of said container;

placing drywall mud into said container to a level above the drywall tape;

drawing said drywall tape through said slots, thereby coating same with drywall mud,

tearing off coated drywall tape while leaving a free end of drywall tape outside said container available for grasping and pulling more drywall tape;

P&K 7/6-02-01

Page 17

attaching to said drywall tape, between said roll and said first slot, a strip of material having a tensile strength substantially unaffected by prolonged exposure to drywall mud, said strip of material being substantially longer than the distance between said first and second slots,

drawing said drywall tape with attached strip of material through said first and second slots until a first end of said strip of material extends outside said container and a second end of said strip of material remains between said roll and said first slot;

sealing said container;

drawing said drywall tape and applied strip of material through said slots until said second end of said strip of material exits said container through said second slot;

tearing off and discarding said strip of material and attached drywall tape, leaving a free end of drywall tape outside said container available for grasping and pulling more coated drywall tape.

F&K 776-02-01

Pag 18

2. The method of Claim 1 wherein said strip of material is adhesive tape and wherein same is adhesively attached to said drywall tape.
3. The method of Claim 1 wherein said strip of material has a width substantially equal to a width of said drywall tape and a thickness such that said drywall tape and attached strip of material substantially fill said first and second slots when same are drawn therethrough, thereby substantially sealing said first and second slots.
4. The method of Claim 1 wherein said strip of material is impervious to moisture from mud and wherein same is attached to said drywall tape so as to surround a portion of drywall tape and prevent moisture from said mud contacting said portion of drywall tape.
5. The method of Claim 2 further comprising adhesively

Page 19

6. The method of Claims 2 or 3 wherein said adhesive tape has a width substantially equal to a width of said drywall tape.
7. The method of any of Claims 1 - 6 further comprising rotatably mounting said roll of drywall tape adjacent to said container.
8. The method of any of Claims 1 - 7 wherein said container includes an open top and wherein sealing said container is accomplished by sealing said open top.
9. The method of Claims 8 wherein sealing said container further includes sealing said slots.

F&K 776-02-01

Page 20

10. The method of Claim 9 wherein said slots are sealed by adhesive tape.
 11. The method of any of Claims 1 - 10 wherein said container comprises sidewalls and a floor, and wherein said slots are substantially horizontal and located on opposing sidewalls in proximity to said floor.
 12. A method for applying drywall mud to drywall tape allowing for lengthy stoppages in a drywall application process, said method comprising:
 - threading a free end of a length of drywall tape, from a roll of drywall tape, from outside a container through a first slot, then through said container, then through a second slot to the outside of said container;
 - placing drywall mud into said container to a level above the drywall tape;
 - drawing said drywall tape through said container and slots, thereby coating same with drywall mud,
-

F&K 776-02-01

Page21

tearing off coated drywall tape while leaving a free end of drywall tape outside said container available for grasping and pulling more drywall tape;

adhesively attaching a first strip of adhesive tape to one side of said drywall tape between said roll and said first slot, said first strip of adhesive tape being substantially longer than the distance between said first and second slots, said adhesive tape having a tensile strength substantially unaffected by prolonged exposure to drywall mud;

drawing said drywall tape with attached adhesive tape through said first and second slots until a first end of said first strip of adhesive tape extends outside said container and a second end of said first strip of adhesive tape remains between said roll and said first slot;

sealing said container;

drawing said drywall tape and applied adhesive tape through said slots until said second end of said first

F6K 776-02-01

Page22

strip of adhesive tape exits said container through said second slot;

tearing off and discarding said first strip of adhesive tape and attached drywall tape, leaving a free end of drywall tape outside said container available for grasping and pulling more drywall tape.

13. An apparatus for applying drywall mud to drywall tape, said apparatus comprising:

a base, having a flat bottom surface, a roll end and a dispensing end;

a container, said container including an open top, sidewalls and a floor, said container attached to an upper surface of said base, between said roll end and said dispensing end;

a first slot defined by one said sidewall facing said roll end of said base, and a second slot defined by an opposite sidewall facing said dispensing end of said base, said slots located in proximity to said floor;

F&K 776-02-01

Page23

a strip of material having a tensile strength substantially unaffected by prolonged exposure to drywall mud, said strip of material being substantially longer than the distance between said first and second slots, said strip of material having a width no greater than a width of said drywall tape;

means for attaching said strip of material to said drywall tape;

a cover operative to releasably seal said open top of said container;

a roll feeding member extending upwards from said roll end of said base;

means to releasably and rotatably mount a roll of drywall tape on said roll feeding member, about a substantially horizontal axis, such that a lower extremity of said roll of drywall tape is above said bottom surface of said base.

14. The apparatus of Claim 13 wherein said slots are

F&K 776-02-01

Page 24

substantially horizontal.

15. The apparatus of Claim 13 or 14 wherein said strip of material is an adhesive strip.
16. The apparatus of any of Claims 13 - 15 wherein said strip of material has a width substantially equal to a width of said drywall tape and a thickness such that said drywall tape and attached strip of material substantially fill said first and second slots when same are drawn therethrough, thereby substantially sealing said first and second slots.
17. The apparatus of any of Claims 13 - 16 wherein said roll feeding member defines a gap therethrough to accommodate a roll of drywall tape.
18. The apparatus of any of Claims 13 - 17 wherein said means to releasably and rotatably mount a roll of drywall tape comprises a horizontal rod.

F&K 776-02-01

Page25

19. The apparatus of Claim 17 wherein said means to releasably and rotatably mount a roll of drywall tape comprises a horizontal rod extending across a top portion of said gap.
20. The apparatus of Claim 19 further comprising a pair of parallel shafts, one at each end of said horizontal rod and extending substantially perpendicular to said horizontal rod, said shafts slidably receivable in apertures defined by said roll feeding member.

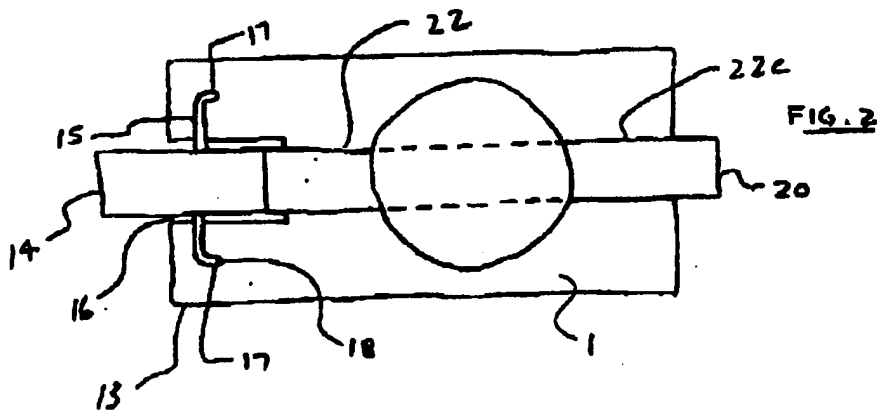
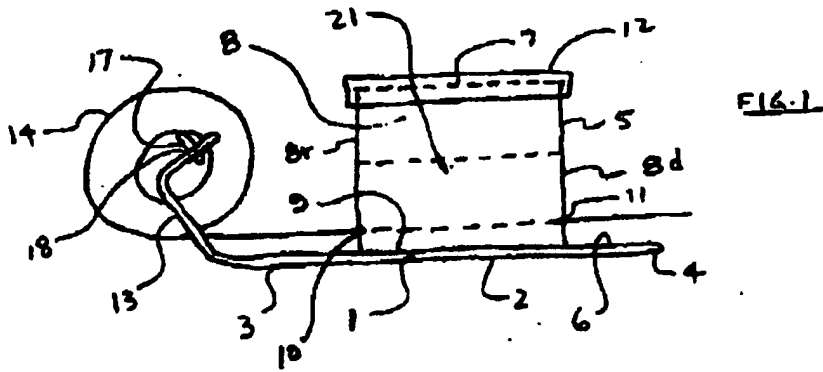


FIG. 6



FIG. 7



